

COVID Rent Relief – In Event of Denial FAQ

Q. I successfully completed the eligibility questionnaire, how can I be denied now?

A. The initial eligibility questionnaire was a not a determination of eligibility. Those questions were intended to narrow the pool of applicants to only those who were most likely to be eligible for assistance based on the information supplied by the applicant. HCR then reviewed all applications to confirm eligibility.

Q. I was denied assistance because I received unemployment. How can that be when I lost my job and my income?

A. The law establishing the COVID Rent Relief program includes unemployment benefits, Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) and Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (PAC) as income. Even though you and your family may have less income now than you did before the COVID 19 pandemic most people receiving enhanced unemployment benefits still had income that was above 80% of the area median income when adjusted by household size and county, the cut off for the program.

You can check your county's area median income based on household size at:

<https://www.hcr.ny.gov/eligible-income-limits-80-ami-county>

Q. I was denied assistance because my income prior to COVID 19 was too high? How can that be when I lost my job and my income?

A. To be eligible for the program an applicant's income had to below 80% of area median both before March 1, 2020 and at time of time of application. So, although you may have suffered a loss of income due to the COVID 19 pandemic if you and your family's adjusted income was more than 80% area median both March 1, 2020 you would not be eligible for assistance.

Q. My income was below 80% of area median income both before March 1, 2020 and it was below 80% of area median income at the time of application. I received a letter saying I was not eligible because I am a tenant in a public housing development. How is that possible?

A. The law helps NYS residents whose rent burden (the percentage of their income they pay monthly in rent) has increased due to the COVID 19 pandemic. As a resident of public housing you should not be paying more than 30% of your income in rent. You should contact your public housing authority and recertify your income in order to have your monthly rent payment adjusted to take into consideration the loss of income.

Q. My income was below 80% of area median income both before March 1, 2020 and it was below 80% of area median income at the time of application. I received a letter saying I was not eligible because I am a Section 8 voucher holder. How is that possible?

A. The law helps NYS residents whose rent burden (the percentage of their income they pay monthly in rent) has increased due to the COVID 19 pandemic. As a Section 8 voucher holder you should not be paying more than 30% of your income in rent. You should contact your Section 8 voucher authorizer and recertify your income in order to have your monthly rent payment adjusted to take into consideration the loss of income.

Q. My income was below 80% of area median income both before March 1, 2020 and it was below 80% of area median income at the time of application. I received a letter saying I was not eligible because I am not a renter. What does that mean?

A. Only renters whose primary residence is in New York State are eligible for the COVID Rent Relief program. Tenants in the following types of rental properties are available for rent relief assistance:

- Apartment rental;
- Rent for a single-family home;
- Manufactured home rental; and
- Manufactured home lot rental.

Manufactured home park residents should only include rental obligations (lot rent and/or home rent) on their application.

Co-op and condominium owners who have proprietary leases are not considered renters.

Q. What if I disagree with HCR's determination of eligibility or the amount of the award?

A. HCR has an appeal process in place if you believe that HCR either made an error in determining eligibility or that HCR made an error in calculating the award. You will have seven (7) business days from the date on your denial to file an appeal and the appeal request can be downloaded from the HCR COVID RRP website: <https://hcr.ny.gov/rrp-appeal-form>.

Q. When and how will applicants be notified of their eligibility?

A. HCR is diligently working to review the applications received for this program. Applicants can expect to get a notification regarding their application in the next several weeks. Applicants will be notified via email or letter, depending on what contact information they submitted with their application.

Q. What is the deadline for filing an appeal?

A. You will have seven (7) business days following notification of your award or denial to file an appeal. If you choose to file an appeal using the paper appeal request form, the

form must be postmarked by the seventh business day following your notification in order to be eligible.

Q. Someone in my household has a disability and we need more time to complete the appeal. Can we get a reasonable accommodation?

A. Yes. Households with one or more individuals with a disability are eligible for an extension of time as a reasonable accommodation. These households will be granted an extension of seven (7) business days in addition to the initial appeal period of seven (7) business days to appeal. If a household requires a reasonable accommodation, they must indicate in Section 1 of the appeal form that they require a reasonable accommodation.

Q. Do I need to submit additional documentation when filing an appeal?

A. If you believe an error was made in the determination of your application, you should submit any documentation that supports this.

Q. When will I be notified of the outcome of my appeal?

A. You will likely receive a determination on your appeal request in approximately 30 calendar days. Timing may vary depending on a variety of factors including the number of appeals received. If you have any questions, please contact: (833) 499-0318.

Q. I received the determination of my appeal but I disagree with it. Can I file another appeal?

A. No. Once you have submitted an appeal, you may not submit another appeal. If you have any questions on how the appeal determination was made, please contact (833) 499-0318.